

/43 cont'd/

385 Each guest has settled himself, not without first having made many an excuse and salaam. All follow the gospel which advises taking the last place in order to see oneself forced to go up toward the first ones. It is a real contest of politeness in which the master of ceremonies is forced to intervene with much circumspection. The parents of the bride do not preside at the festivity.

135 At the table one is all the more at ease if there are fewer /44/
264 guests. The felt rugs and the litterers of straw are very practical
285 "seats" at these wedding dinners, since they permit seating as many people as one wishes. The guests having taken their places, the meal is begun by serving tea with milk and dry bread. Because the interior of the rectangle remains free, the service is done briskly. Do not expect to see beautiful teapots, milk jugs, cups, saucers, plates of fine porcelain. The milk is already poured into the tea in the kitchen, the copper teapots are those of every day; the bread is put around in piles on the tables, the cup is made of white earthenware but without cracks.

385 After the tea, well-heated gin is served. It is poured into
273 about 20 small terra cotta cups, which each one passes to the other after drinking two or three swallows. The women drink the gin like
585 the men. They chatter, they smoke, while waiting for the main
262 dish, which consists of a sheep served whole and cooked to a turn.
264 The head and the saddle are detached but put back in place so as to give the illusion of one intact piece. Three sheep are served at a time. While the sheep are being admired, the servers distribute to
[41] each guest a small wooden receptacle which has the shape of a saucer and in which vinegar is poured. Several wooden boxes containing salt and pimento are in the center of the table. The T'ou-
[263] jen do not use forks or spoons; the fingers are the main means of eating, as they maneuver with a knife and the pair of chopsticks which each guest carries in a case attached to his belt. The servers take the meat with their fingers, cut it in pieces, and fill the saucers of the guests with it. The meat is eaten seasoned with salt, pimento, and vinegar, and one adds to it a piece of bread. The bones are
[63] thrown on the table or on the ground. As soon as the mutton is tackled, complete silence reigns over the assemblage, all of whom

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Rich T'ou-jen widow, no longer speaking her language, wearing no longer the costume of her race. Type of completely Sinicized T'ou-jen, even having the little Chinese feet. However, at her death she will be dressed in the T'ou-jen style for her last toilette!